



## THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG

### OFFICE OF PARKS, FACILITIES, RECREATION & CULTURE

*MISSION STATEMENT: Committed to delivering cost-effective and efficient services for the residents of the Town of Amherstburg with a view to improve and enhance their quality of life.*

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Author's Phone: 519 736-0012 ext. 2218	Date to Council: October 13, 2020
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**To: Mayor and Members of Town Council**

**Subject: Augmented Reality Olde Amherstburg Walking Tour**

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#### 1. **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that:

1. The report regarding Augmented Reality Olde Amherstburg Walking Tour from the Manager of Tourism and Culture dated September 25, 2020 **BE RECEIVED for information.**

#### 2. **BACKGROUND:**

Amherstburg historic sites, buildings, places, legends and stories are all part of the rich cultural fabric of Amherstburg. The Olde Amherstburg Walking Tour is a new, relevant, mobile application that creates experiences for the public in a new and interesting way through augmented reality.

Augmented reality (AR) is an interactive experience of a real-world environment. AR uses existing reality and physical objects to trigger computer-generated enhancements over the top of reality, in real time. Essentially, AR is a technology that lays computer-generated images over a user's view of the real world. These images typically take shape as 3D models, videos, audio and information.

#### 3. **DISCUSSION:**

The Town has purchased the Olde Amherstburg Walking Tour Application (App) from Pop Sandbox Productions and Publishing. One of the features on the App is stories about ghosts or unusual renditions. "Ghost tourism", especially which preserves period-specific architecture has been highly trending. It is a new and creative strategy to engage new markets. The advantage of "ghost tourism" is that participants can still learn about the history and sense of place of the featured location.

Stories, research and historical information collected for the new AR App is in collaboration with the Marsh Historical Collection and local historians Debbie and Robert Honor. It will include thirteen Amherstburg sites. The following sites have been featured for their historic, geographical walking location and “ghost” tourism appeal.

The sites included are:

- Artisan Grill
- Beacon Ale House
- Bondy House B & B
- Christ Church & Cemetery
- Fort Malden National Historic Site
- Gibson Gallery
- Gordon House
- King's Navy Yard Park South
- King's Navy Yard Park North
- Lord Amherst Pub
- Lot 10 Brewery
- Park House Museum
- Rosa's Italian Restaurant

Elements of the App include:

- GPS self guidance
- Audio narrations
- Historical image gallery
- Augmented reality ghosts
- 360-3D model creations
- Option for Selfie with ghost or site character
- Direct social media option
- Musical score
- Bilingual (French) narrative option
- Measurable – analytical data
- Accessible
- Maintenance and Support (two years)
- Free to the user in year one

The next step is to make the App available for public use, with the launch date expected to be mid-October 2020.

#### **4. RISK ANALYSIS:**

Currently under the COVID-19 pandemic, most sites or businesses are closed or have limited hours and staff. The AR technology gives the user unlimited access from roadside at any independent time of day/night through an interactive, outdoor experience to learn about the history and legends of Amherstburg. Idle promotion of our sites may result in losing visitors and our ranking as a key, historical community and destination until we can re-imagine full capacity of these sites once again.

## 5. **FINANCIAL MATTERS:**

The App was purchased from Pop Sandbox Productions and Publishing under a sole source procurement approved by the CAO under his delegated authority.

The cost of the App was \$16,505 including net HST, which is within the approved 2020 Budget and is reflected as promotion expense and advertising expense respectively in the Tourism & Culture budget centre.

Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island has committed to provide sponsorship funding for this initiative in the amount of \$15,000. The balance of the cost (\$1,505) is funded from current taxation.

Maintenance and support for the App for the first two year is included in the purchase cost. The ongoing cost of maintenance and support beyond year two will be included in future budget requests and is estimated at \$1,250 plus HST per year.

Users may download the App free of charge for the first year. Administration will monitor usage and will consider implementation of a fee for this service beyond year one toward funding the maintenance and support costs of the App.

## 6. **CONSULTATIONS:**

- Marsh Historic Collection
- Debbie and Robert Honor; Local Historians
- Fort Malden NHSC
- Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island
- Each of the 13 sites mentioned above. Managers have been contacted and they have submitted or recounted their stories, legends, history and pictures.
- Pop Sandbox Productions and Publishing, an award-winning multimedia production company

## 7. **CONCLUSION:**

The AR Olde Amherstburg Walking Tour App has been developed at a pivotal time in our society. This alternative and relevant method of presentation of the Town's historic sites, buildings and places gives residents and visitors another safe-distancing choice as they continue visiting and learning about Amherstburg both during the pandemic and in future.



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Anne Rota  
**Manager of Tourism & Culture**



## Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Augmented Reality Olde Amherstburg Walking Tour .docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Oct 7, 2020

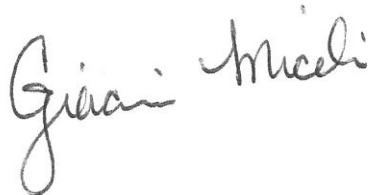
This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:



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